

of whites reported no mode of exposure to HIV/AIDS.

As among whites, men having sex with men was the most common mode of exposure to HIV/AIDS among blacks. However, among blacks, MSM accounted for about half of cases (51%) compared with nearly three-quarters of white cases. Injecting drug use accounted for a higher proportion of AIDS cases among blacks (20%) than among whites (8%). The combination of IDU and MSM accounted for a similar proportion of cases as among whites (9%), while heterosexual sex accounted for substantially more cases among blacks (16%) than whites (6%). Fewer blood product exposures were reported for blacks (2%) than whites (4%), and about 2% of cases were not attributed to an exposure category among blacks, the same as for whites (Figure 2.5.3).

The other race category primarily (90%) comprises Hispanics.²⁶ Statistical instability caused by the small numbers of cases among other races in Tennessee overall, and in each exposure category, requires that the data be interpreted with extreme caution. Among the other race group, MSM accounted for less than half of cases (43%), a lower proportion than for whites and blacks. IDU accounted for one-quarter of cases among other races, which was somewhat higher than among blacks and substantially higher than among whites. The combination of IDU and MSM accounted for a similar proportion of cases among all races, while heterosexual sex accounted for substantially more cases among blacks and other races than whites. No blood product exposures were reported for other races, but fully 10% of AIDS cases for other races had not yet been attributed to a specific exposure category as of March 1996.

In the provisional 1995 data, the blood exposures related to medical treatment and care were not implicated in any diagnosed AIDS cases for black and white females nor for members of other races of either gender (Table 2.5.2). Moreover, they were implicated in less than 2% of white and black male AIDS cases. Again, the incompleteness of the reporting for 1995 makes these data preliminary.

2.5.4. Exposure Categories in Detail

This section of the report profiles AIDS cases based on the four main high risk exposure categories -- men having sex with men (MSM), injecting drug use (IDU), cases with both MSM and IDU exposure, and cases of heterosexual transmission. Previously, the overall distribution of exposures by sex and race was documented cumulatively and provisionally for 1995. Here each of the four main exposure categories is profiled to aid prevention planning.

²⁶ Also included under "other races" are Asian/Pacific Islanders, and Native Americans and Alaskan Natives, not listed separately to maintain anonymity.